

Engl: Theat:
Vol 81.

ALONZO. K

A TRAGEDY.

IN FIVE ACTS.

As it is performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

Et mentem strinxit patriæ pietatis imago. VIRGIL.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed for T. BECKET, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXIII.

(Price One Shilling and Sixpence.)

A. L. O. L. E. C.

T. R. A. D. Y.

IN THE ACTS

THEATRE OF THE



THE THIRD EDITION

LONDON:

Printed by J. B. G. & Co. 10, St. Martin's Lane.

1854.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of the following Tragedy, has, in his former attempts of the same kind, avoided to trouble the reader with either dedication or preface. His chief reason for declining this common mode of appearing before the public, was the necessity, which it would lay him under, of speaking concerning himself and his works. The success of Alonzo calls upon him to depart from his former plan; and to break that silence, which might now be reckoned arrogant, and even ungrateful, to those, from whom he in a great measure derives his success.

He embraces with pleasure, this occasion, to acknowledge his obligations to THE MANAGERS of the theatre, whose friendly, anxious, and active zeal he hath so often experienced: To THE PERFORMERS, who have so strenuously contended with each other, in their very generous endeavours to embellish the representation of the piece: To MRS. BARRY—but the public voice has exalted HER above his praise: Yet he claims the merit of

A 2

having,

ADVERTISEMENT:

having, before others, observed her now allowed and unrivalled excellence. From the colour of the dawn, he foretold the brightness of the day.

For MRS. BARRY he wrote the part of Orminda, and the most flattering circumstance to him, in the success of his play, is the universal opinion, (vouched, not only by the loudest applause that ever shook the stage, but by the greatest effusion of tears) that the ACTRESS so much exalted THE CHARACTER, that she exceeded all imagination, and reached the summit of perfection.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

WHILST ardent Zeal for India's Reformation,
Hath fired the Spirit of a generous Nation ;
Whilst Patriots of presented Lacks complain,
And Courtiers Bribery to Excess arraign ;
The Maxims of Bengal still rule the Stage,
The Poets are your Slaves from Age to Age.
Like Eastern Princes in this House you sit,
The Soubahs, and Nabobs of suppliant Wit ;
Each Bard his Present brings, when he draws near,
With Prologue first, he sooths your gracious Ear ;
We hope your Clemency will shine to Day,
For tho' despotic, gentle is your Sway.
These conscious Walls if they cou'd speak wou'd tell,
How seldom by your Doom, a Poet fell :
Your Mercy oft suspends the Critics Laws,
Your Hearts are partial, to an Author's Cause.
Pleas'd with such Lords, content with our Condition,
Against your Charter we will ne'er petition.
If certain Folks, should send us a Committee,
(Like that which lately visited the City)
Who without special Leave of our Directors,
At the Stage Door shou'd enter as Inspectors ;
Altho' their Hearts were arm'd with triple Brass,
Thro' our resisting Scenes, they could not pass.
Lions and Dragons too keep watch and ward,
Witches and Ghosts the awful entrance guard ;

[The curtain rises.

Heroes who mock the pointed Sword are here,
And desperate Heroines who know no Fear ;

PROLOGUE,

*If as Rinaldo stout each Man should prove,
To brave the Terrors of the enchanted Grove,
Here on this Spot, the Center of our State,
Here on this very Spot they'd meet their Fate.
The Prompter gives the Sign, and down they go;*

[The curtain falls,

*Alive descending to the Shades below.
To you whose Empire still may Heav'n maintain,
Who here by antient Right and Custom reign,
Our Lions couch, our Dragons prostrate fall,
Witches and Ghosts obey your potent Call.
Our Heroines smile on you with all their Might,
Our boldest Heroes tremble in your Sight,
Even now with anxious Hearts they watch your Eyes,
Should you but frown, even brave ALONZO flies,*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MEN

KING	Mr. Aldrich
ALONZO	Mr. Redman
ALBERTO	Mr. Quinn
COSTELLO	Mr. Aldrich
SEBASTIAN	Mr. Parker
HARRY	Mr. Wright
VILLASO	Mr. Jefferson
MESSENGER	Mr. J. Barnard

WOMEN

ORMISTONDA	Miss Barron
TENNES	Miss Marshall

Of course and so forth

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

KING,	Mr. AICKIN.
ALONZO,	Mr. REDDISH.
ALBERTO (<i>his Son</i>)	Mr. CLINCH.
COSTOLLO,	Mr. J. AICKIN.
SEBASTIAN,	Mr. PALMER.
HAMET,	Mr. WRIGHT.
VELASCO,	Mr. JEFFERSON.
MESSENGER,	Mr. J. BANNISTER.

W O M E N.

ORMISINDA,	Mrs. BARRY.
TERESA,	Miss MANSELL.

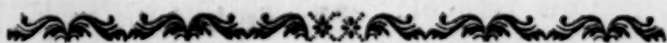
Officers and Attendants, &c.



A L O N Z O.

A

T R A G E D Y.




A C T I.

S C E N E I.

A ball in the palace of the kings of Spain.

ORMISINDA. TERESA.

ORMISINDA.

 HIS roll contains the secret of my life,
And of the state: My marriage with
Alonzo,
The story of my son, my injured child,
Bred in a desert, tho' the heir of Spain.
To thee, my faithful friend, my lov'd Teresa!
This precious record I commit. Oh! keep it
From sight of human eye, till better times:

B

For

For still I hope that better times may come,
 Tho' not to me, to this afflicted land,
 My hand hath signed it, and my act to day
 Shall give it faith and credence with mankind.
 This will explain the mystery of my fate,
 And tell the world why Ormisinda died.

[*Gives the writing.*]

TERESA.

Do not too soon despair.

ORMISINDA.

I wait the last
 Decisive moment. But to guard my soul
 Against the sallies of a rash despair,
 Against the weakness which attends surprise,
 I have forecast whatever may befall,
 And fram'd to the event my firm resolve.
 This is the day appointed for the combat,
 Between a Moorish and a Christian knight,
 To end the wars of Spain, and fix the fate
 Of the contending nations.

TERESA.

Antient times,
 If tales of ancient times may be believ'd,
 Have known such combats. In her infant state,
 Against her rival Alba, Rome was pledg'd
 As now Asturia is: But later times
 Afford no parallel.

ORMISINDA.

There never was,
Nor will there ever, while the world endures,
Be found a parallel to my distress—
I am the victor's prize---whoe'er prevails
He gains the princess, and the crown of Spain.
Such is the solemn treaty, sworn, confirm'd,
By every rite, which either nation owns.
Mean while I am Alonzo's wedded wife----
I am a mother---by the false Alonzo,
Who from his hate to me abandons Spain,
Which he alone can save. No other arm
Can match Mirmallon's force. Proud of his strength
Already in the lists the Moor exults,
Secure of victory. The setting sun
Concludes the dreadful period of suspense,
And death alone from infamy can save me.

TERESA.

He yet may come. Far in the Nubian wilds,
That guard the secret sources of the Nile,
Velasco found the chief. The wind of spring,
The constant East, this year forgot its season,
And only since this moon her light renew'd,
Began to blow upon the western shore.
On that I build a hope.

ORMISINDA.

I have no hope!
Review the story of my life, Teresa,

B 2

And

And by the past conjecture of the future,
First my lamented brother, blindly led
By proud Ramirez, quarrell'd with Alonzo,
Then by Alonzo's sword Ramirez fell,
For that offence to banishment condemn'd,
Alonzo won me to accept his hand
Before he left this kingdom. Since that time,
What I have suffer'd, Heav'n, and you can tell,
It was the fifth, a memorable day,
After our marriage, when he fail'd to come,
At the appointed place to meet his bride.
Then 'midst my fear, anxiety, and sorrow,
For only death I thought, or dangerous harm,
Could keep him from my arms, amaz'd I heard
That he was gone for Asia. To this hour,
Ev'n to this present hour, no cause assign'd
But these distracted lines long after sent :
" Thou never shalt behold Alonzo more ;
" The foul, foul cause thy guilty conscience knows."
My conscience knows no cause, so help me Heav'n !
Now, in my utmost need, this dreadful day,
When I must struggle with despair and Death,
To keep myself a chaste, a blameless wife,
And to my silent grave the secret bear,
That my dear son and his may live to wield
The sceptre of his fathers !

TERESA.

To this hour,
Thy husband knows not that he is a father,

ALONZO.

3

ORMISINDA.

His ears, his eyes are shut. Oft' have I sent
Letters that would have pierc'd an heart of stone;
Pleading for pity, begging but to know,
Wherein I had unwittingly offended:
But every letter, with unbroken seal,
To me return'd. He will not read one word
From my detested hand.

TERESA.

'Tis very strange,
And much unlike the way of other men.
For tho' they are inconstant in their love,
There is a course and process in the change.
Ardent at first, their ardor lasts not long.
With easy, full, secure possession cloy'd,
Their passion palls, and cold indifference comes,
As chilly autumn steals on summer's prime,
Making the green leaf yellow. Then it is
That some new beauty takes their roving eyes,
And fires their fancy with untasted charms.
But in a moment, from excess of love,
To the extreme of hate Alonzo pass'd
Without a cause. Nor did another come
Between thee and the current of his love.
'Tis moon-struck madness, or the dire effect
Of incantation, charm, compulsive spell,
By magic fasten'd on his wretched soul.
It can be nothing else.

ORMISINDA.

Whate'er it is,
He shuns all woman-kind. His life is spent
In war and in devotion. When the field
Is won, the warrior lays aside his spear,
Takes up the pilgrim's staff, and all alone,
Obscur'd in homely weeds, he bends his course
To some remote, religious, holy place,
Where he exceeds the strictest penitent,
In penances severe and sad austerity.
Sometimes in deeper melancholy wrapt
He loaths the sight of man, and to the cliffs
Of hoary Caucasus or Atlas flies,
Where all the dreary winter he remains,
And, desolate, delights in desolation.
My faithful servant Juan saw him once
Upon the ledge of Atlas; on a rock
Beside the empty channel of a brook,
He stood and gaz'd intent a cataract
Which, as it tumbled from a cliff, the blast
Had caught mid-way, and froze before it fell.
Juan drew near and call'd. He turn'd about,
Look'd at him for a space, then wav'd him back,
And mounting swiftly sunk behind the hill,
Wan was his face, and like a statue pale!
His eye was wild and haggard! Oh! Teresa,
Amidst my woes, my miseries, my wrongs!
My bosom bleeds for him!

TERESA.

Something there is
Mysterious and unfathomable here,
Which passes human wisdom to divine.
The hand of fate is on the curtain now.
Within my breast a firm persuasion dwells,
That in the lists Alonzo will appear.
Behold in haste the king your father comes,
And seems the messenger of welcome tidings.

Enter the KING.

KING.

I come in this alarming hour, my child,
To pour a ray of comfort on thy heart.
A valiant Moor, once captive of my sword,
And ever since, my firm but secret friend,
Acquaints me that a champion is at hand,
Shunning those honors which the Moors would pay :
Dark and reserv'd he travels thro' their towns
Without a name. I judge it is Alonzo,
For the description best accords with him.
Scorning his foes, offended with his friends,
Shrouded in anger and in deep disdain,
Like some prime planet in eclipse he moves,
Gaz'd at and fear'd.

ORMISINDA:

It is! It is Alonzo!

Welcome, most welcome, in whatever shape.
The hero comes to save his native land,
To save the honour of the Christian name,

And

And o'er the fading crescent of the Moor
Exalt the holy cross.

KING.

And, ev'n as thine
Is the consenting voice of all the land.
The hope of Spain on brave Alonzo rests.
In this I see the ruling hand of heav'n,
Which to its own eternal purpose leads,
By winding paths, the steps of erring man !
Painful it were to speak of those events
Sad and disastrous which have laid us low.
Unjustly was Alonzo banish'd hence,
And happily the hero now returns.
For since my son, your valiant brother, fell,
With an impartial mind I have enquir'd
And trac'd the story of Alonzo's birth.
He is the offspring of our ancient kings,
The rightful heir of Riccaredo's line,
Called the Catholic, who reign'd in Spain
Before the first invasion of the Moors.
Lost in the gen'ral wreck, buried and hid
Beneath the ruins of a fallen state,
Obscure, unknown, the royal infant lay,
When I, indignant of a foreign yoke,
In wild Asturia rose against the Moors.
The righteous cause prevail'd ; the baffled foe
Retir'd, and left us and our mountains free.
The grateful people chose their leader king.

I knew

I knew not then, nor did my people know,
Ought of Alonzo.

ORMISINDA.

I have heard him own
The justice of thy title to command
And rule the state thy valor had restor'd.
Enough, he said, remain'd for him to conquer:
The fertile provinces of ample Spain,
Which still the Moor usurps.

KING.

Of all mankind,
He is the champion whom my soul desires
This day to fight for Spain and for my daughter;
Not only for his great renown in arms,
But for his birth, his lineage, and his blood.
If his unconquer'd arm in fight prevails,
The antient monarchy shall rise again,
In all its splendor and extent of empire.
The streams of royal blood divided now,
Shall roll a tide united thro' the land.

ORMISINDA.

Thy heart dilates with pleasing hopes, my father!
And fond anticipates its own desire.
But who can tell the purpose of Alonzo?
His strange approach no friendly aspect bears:
He comes the foe determin'd of the Moors,
But not to us a friend.

KING.

Of that no fear,

I know him proud, impetuous, and fierce,
 Haughty of heart, and high of hand: Too prompt
 On all occasions to appeal to arms.
 But he was ever gentle to my daughter:
 The proud Alonzo bow'd the knee to thee,
 At his departure I observ'd thy grief,
 And in my mind-----

(A trumpet sounds.)

ORMISINDA.

What means that shout of war?

KING.

The trumpet sounds to arms.

(Enter a messenger.)

MESSENGER.

Thy presence, Sir,
 Is at the camp requir'd. Both nations arm,
 And rush to battle: Loud the Moors complain
 Of violated faith. A Spanish knight
 They say has broke the treaty, and attack'd
 Their bands, of peace secure.

KING.

'Tis basely done!
 Command my guards to meet me at the gate.
 Farewel.

[Exit the King.]

TERESA.

Who can this headlong warrior be?
 Too well Alonzo knows the laws of war,
 Too much reveres the treaty seal'd and sworn,
 To make a rash attempt upon the Moors.

ORMISINDA.

If it is he, 'tis no deliberate act,
 No treacherous intention to assail
 The Moors unguarded. Yet it may be he:
 My mind misgives me that it is Alonzo.
 Ill would his swelling spirit brook the sight
 Of Moorish tents and arms on yonder plain.
 If as he pass'd, one slighting word was dropt,
 With tenfold scorn to that he would reply,
 Nor hesitate alone to draw his sword
 Amidst an host of Moors.

TERESA.

The clamour links.
 Whate'er it was, the tumult is appeas'd.
 And now what does my Ormisinda think
 Of my predictions?

ORMISINDA:

Oh! my dear Teresa!
 Thy fond desire to cheer my hopeless heart
 Makes thee for ever to my mind present
 The fairest side of things.

TERESA.

Ha! dost thou doubt
Still of his coming?

ORMISINDA.

No, I think 'tis he;
But hope and fear alternate sway my mind:
Like light and shade upon a waving field
Coursing each other, when the flying clouds
Now hide and now reveal the sun of heav'n.
I tremble for the issue of the combat;
And if my Lord should, as I hope, prevail,
I tremble for myself: Afraid to see,
Tho' sick with strong impatience to behold him,
And learn why he forsook his Ormisinda.
He says I know the cause. Oh! most unjust!
Was it because I lov'd him to excess,
Altho' his title shook my father's throne?
Was it because I join'd my fate to his,
And fondly chose to wed a banish'd man?
For such are my demerits.

TERESA.

'Tis but vain
Thus to torment thyself, and rack thy mind
With sad conjectures, at a time like this,
When the reality will soon be known.

ORMISINDA.

I know one thing that's real, 'tis a fault,
An imperfection which I cannot cure;

Eighteen

Eighteen long years are past since I beheld him,
 And grief and care, those tenants that deface
 The sad and dreary mansion they inhabit,
 Have dwelt with me. Am I not alter'd much?
 The ghost and shadow of what once I was?

T E R E S A.

No, Ormisinda, I perceive no change;
 That in the least impairs thy lovely form.
 The beam that gilds the early morn of youth
 Yields to the splendor of a riper hour:
 The rose that was so fair in bud, is blown;
 And grief and care, tho' they have dwelt with thee,
 Have left no traces of their visitation,
 But an impression sweet of melancholy
 Which captivates the soul. Unskilful they
 Who dress the queen of love in wanton smiles:
 Brightest she shines amidst a show'r of tears;
 The graces that adorn her beauty most,
 Are softness, sensibility, and pity.

O R M I S I N D A.

Oh! how ingenious thou art, Teresa,
 How subtle to elude my simple fears!
 Still they advance and gather round my heart.
 If nothing can recal Alonzo's love,
 Let him but own his son, and I'll renounce
 The title of his wife, and of a queen;
 Then in a convent hide me and my sorrows.
 The saddest sister of the holy train,

Whose

Whose watchful zeal prevents the midnight bell,
Shall find me kneeling on the marble floor.
Oh! it will be the luxury of grief,
To weep incessant in the vaulted cell,
To lift my hands, and send my vows to heav'n,
Invoking every power that dwells above,
To guard and bless my husband and my son!
Perhaps some friend, most likely my Teresa,
When I am quite forsaken and forgot
By all the world, will still remember me;
Will come and tell me of Alonzo's wars;
Tell how my boy in his first battle fought,
At once the rival of his father's fame.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.**SCENE I.**

*Enter the KING and a Moorish officer, with
Moors and Spaniards.*

KING.

HAMET, impartial justice shall be done,
And thou I know as justly wilt report it:
Thou art the friend of peace.

HAMET.

Therefore I fought
This office; for in yonder camp, O! King,
Some counsellors there are who urg'd the Caliph
To take advantage of this fair occasion
And hold the treaty void.

KING.

That I believe,
But with your aid I hope to disappoint them;
My guards are gone to bring th' offender hither.

HAMET.

Yonder they come, and thro' their files I see
A prisoner.

[Enter guards with a young man armed.]

KING.

Ha! by Heaven, he's but a youth,
A beardless boy, and like a woman fair.
He moves my pity much. Unhappy youth!

[*To the prisoner.*]

Art thou the chief of that unruly band,
Who broke the treaty and assail'd the Moors?

YOUTH.

No chief, no leader of a band am I.
The leader of a band insulted me,
And those he led basely assail'd my life;
With bad success indeed. If self-defence
Be criminal, O King! I have offended.

KING. [*To Hamet.*]

With what a noble confidence he speaks!
See what a spirit through his blushes breaks!
Observe him, Hamet.

HAMET.

I am fix'd upon him,

KING.

Didst thou alone engage a band of Moors
And make such havoc? Sure it cannot be.
Recall thy scattered thoughts. Nothing advance
Which proof may overthrow,

YOUTH.

What I have said
No proof can overthrow. Where is the man,
Who speaking from himself, not from reports
And rumours idle, will stand forth and say
I was not single when the Moors attack'd me?

H A M E T.

I will not be that man, tho' I confess,
That I came hither to accuse thee, Youth!
And to demand thy punishment.—I brought
The tale our soldiers told.

YOUTH.

The tale was false.

H A M E T.

I thought it true; but thou hast shook my faith.
The seal of truth is on thy gallant form,
For none but cowards lie.

K I N G.

Thy story tell,
With every circumstance which may explain
The seeming wonder; how a single man
In such a strife could stand?

YOUTH.

'Twill cease to be
A wonder, when thou hear'st the story told.
This morning on my road to Oviedo

D

A while

A while I halted near a Moorish post.
 Of the commander I enquir'd my way,
 And told my purpose, that I came to see
 The famous combat. With a scornful smile,
 With taunting words and gestures he replied,
 Mocking my youth. Advis'd me to return
 Back to my father's house, and in the ring
 To dance with boys and girls. He added too
 That I should see no combat. That no knight
 Of Spain durst meet the champion of the Moors,
 Incens'd I did indeed retort his scorn.
 The quarrel grew apace, and I defied him,
 To a green hill, which rose amidst the plain,
 An arrow's flight or farther from his post.
 Alone we sped: at once we drew, we fought.
 The Moorish captain fell. Enrag'd his men
 Flew to revenge his death. Secure they came
 Each with his utmost speed. Those who came first
 Single I met and slew. More wary grown
 The rest together join'd, and all at once
 Assail'd me. Then I had no hopes of life.
 But suddenly a troop of Spaniards came
 And charg'd my foes, who did not long sustain
 The shock, but fled, and carried to their camp
 That false report which thou, O King! hast heard.

KING.

Now by my sceptre, and my sword, I swear,
 Thou art a noble youth. An angel's voice

Could not command a more implicit faith
 Than thou from me hast gain'd. What think'st
 thou, Hamet?
 Is he not greatly wrong'd?

H A M E T.

By Allah! yes.

The voice of truth and innocence is bold,
 And never yet could guilt that tone assume.
 I take my leave impatient to return,
 And satisfy my friends that this brave youth
 Was not th' aggressor.

K I N G.

I expect no less
 From gen'rous Hamet.

[*Exit Hamet and Moors.*]

K I N G.

Tell me, wondrous Youth!
 For much I long to know; what is thy name?
 Who are thy parents? Since the Moor prevail'd,
 The cottage and the cave have oft' conceal'd
 From hostile hate the noblest blood of Spain;
 Thy spirit speaks for thee. Thou art a shoot
 Of some illustrious stock, some noble house
 Whose fortunes with their falling country fell.

Y O U T H.

Alberto is my name. I draw my birth
 From Catalonia; in the mountains there

My father dwells, and for his own domains
 Pays tribute to the Moor. He was a soldier :
 Oft' I have heard him of your battles speak,
 Of Cavadonga's and Olalles' field.
 But ever since I can remember ought,
 His chief employment and delight have been
 To train me to the use and love of arms ;
 In martial exercise we past the day ;
 Morning and evening, still the theme was war.
 He bred me to endure the summer's heat,
 And brave the winter's cold : To swim across
 The headlong torrent, when the shoals of ice
 Drove down the stream. To rule the fiercest steed
 That on our mountains run. No savage beast
 The forest yields that I have not encounter'd.
 Meanwhile my bosom beat for nobler game ;
 I long'd in arms to meet the foes of Spain.
 Oft' I implor'd my father to permit me,
 Before the truce was made, to join the host.
 He said it must not be, I was too young
 For the rude service of these trying times.

KING.

Did he permit you now ?

ALBERTO.

A strange adventure

Forc'd me from home. Not many days ago,
 When hunting in the woods, I heard a voice,
 A woman's

A woman's voice, calling aloud for help.
I rush'd into the thicket; there I saw
A Moorish Lord, for brutal licence fam'd,
Who shamefully abus'd a rural maid
Of Spanish race. I free'd her from his arms.
The Moor spake not a word, but mad with rage
Snatch'd up his lance, which stood against a tree,
And at me flew. I turn'd his point aside,
And with a slender javelin pierc'd his heart.
I hasten'd home, but did not find my father;
Nor was it safe to wait for his return.
I took the fairest armour in the hall,
And hither bent my course. The rest thou know'st.

KING.

Thou art a prodigy, and fill'st my mind
With thoughts profound and expectation high.
When in a nation, humbled by the will
Of Providence, beneath an haughty foe,
A person rises up, by nature rear'd,
Sublime, above the level of mankind;
Like that bright bow, the hand of the most High
Bends in the war'ry cloud: He is the sign
Of prosp'rous change and interposing Heav'n:
And thou, if right I read—

(Enter Messenger.)

MESSENGER.

The champion, Sir,
Who comes to fight for Spain, is near at hand:

One

One of our scouts has seen him and his train,
But brings a strange report, which damps the heart
Of every Spaniard. It is not Alonzo.

KING.

What say'st thou? God of heaven! Not Alonzo!
Who is he then?

MESSENGER.

That is not fully known.

Clad in the flowing vesture of the east,
A Persian turban on his head he wears,
Yet he's a christian knight. To mark his faith,
Holy, and adverse to Mohammed's law,
Before his steps a silken banner borne
Streams in the wind, and shews a golden cross.

KING.

Send out another scout.

MESSENGER.

There is not time

To go and to return.

KING.

Begone, begone,
And let me be obey'd. Alas! my hopes
Are vanish'd like a dream. [Exit Messenger.

ALBERTO.

I grieve to see
The King afflicted.

KING.

Ah! Thou dost not know
How deep these tidings strike.

ALBERTO.

Is not the King
Free to accept or to refuse the aid
This stranger offers?

KING.

If I am, what then?

ALBERTO.

Be not offended, Sir, at my presumption,
For from my heart I speak, a loyal heart,
True to my sov'reign and my native land.
If this is not Alonzo, why should he,
Or any stranger fight the cause of Spain?
Are there not warriors born of Spanish race,
Who court the combat?

KING.

To my words attend.

The Moorish champion is of great renown;
In stature like the giant race of old,
Like Anak's true, or Titan's fabled sons,
Against the foe nor sword nor spear he lifts,
But in his might secure, a mace he wields,
Whose sway resistless breaks both shield and arm,
And crushes head and helmet. Thus he fights,
Whose

Whose fatal prowess turn'd the doubtful scale
Of three successive battles. He is deem'd
Invincible but by Alonzo's arm:

Therefore our warriors, tho' they know no fear,
No fear of ought that can themselves befall,
Anxious for Spain, to great Alonzo yield,
And on his valour rest.

ALBERTO.

Oft' have I heard
My father speak of brave Alonzo's deeds;
What can with-hold him when his country calls?
Perhaps the last of combats he has fought,
And in the silent tomb the hero rests.
But, since he's absent, from whatever cause,
O! let no stranger knight his place assume,
To bring dishonour on the Spanish name.
If this gigantic champion of the Moors,
Clad in the glory of his battles won,
Dazzles the warriors, and confounds their valour;
Let me, tho' young in arms, the combat claim,
On me his fame has no impression made.
I'll meet the giant with a fearless heart.
It beats for battle now. Oft' have I kill'd
The wolf, the boar, and the wild mountain bull,
For sport and pastime. Shall this Moorish dog
Resist me fighting in my country's cause?

KING.

By heaven and earth, thou mov'st me much ! thy
words

Have stirr'd the embers of my youthful fire. —
Thou mak'st me wish I could recal those days,
When of an age like thine, and not unlike
To thee in face and form, I rais'd the spear
Against the Moor, in Cava's bloody field.
Then by my hand the great Alchammon fell,
The strength and pillar of the Caliph's host.
Then I was fit to meet Mirmallon's arm.
But now, my hairs are gray, my steps are slow,
My sword descending breaks the shield no more :
Our foes have known it long.

ALBERTO.

O ! King, thou art
Thy country's great deliv'rer, and the sole
Restorer of the state. Pelagio's fame
Shall never die : But let thy counsel now
(As oft' thy valour) save this land from shame.
Let not a foreign warrior take the field,
And snatch the glory from the lance of Spain.

KING.

My voice alone cannot determine that.
The council sit assembled near the lists,
To them I will present thee. If this knight
Unknown, who from that distant region comes,
Where the bright sun lights up his golden lamp,
Bears not some high pre-eminence about him,

E

Which

Which marks him out our surest safest choice;
My voice is for a Spaniard, and for thee!

ALBERTO.

Upon my knees, that ne'er were bow'd before
To mortal man, I thank thee!

KING.

Rise, Alberto!
To me no thanks are due. A greater King,
The King of Kings, I deem hath chosen thee
To be the champion of his law divine
Against the Infidel.—If not for this,
For some great purpose sure thou art ordain'd.
Bred in the desert, and by heav'n endued
With force and valor marvellously great,
Conducted by a hand unseen, thyself
Not knowing whither, and this day produc'd
Before the nations.

ALBERTO.

Ah! my soul's on fire!
Should such a glorious destiny be mine!
May I intreat to go without delay?
I fear some gallant warrior may step forth
And claim the fight before me.

KING.

Stay, Sebastian,
And to my daughter tell what has befall'n.

[*Exeunt King and Alberto.*]

(*Manet* SEBASTIAN.)

How many changes mark this awful day!
What must the Princess suffer! Well I know
That she above all others wish'd Alonzo.

Enter ORMISINDA and TERESA.

TERESA.

It is a false report. In times like these
The minds of men are credulous and weak:
To rumor's shifting blast they bow and bend,
Like corn of slender reed to every wind.
Thou know'st that from the East Alonzo comes.
Might not the hasty messenger mistake
For him some turban'd warrior of his train?

ORMISINDA.

O! good Sebastian, canst thou tell me ought?
Is it Alonzo?

SEBASTIAN.

If report speaks truth,
And so the King believes, 'tis not Alonzo.

ORMISINDA.

Then I am lost, Teresa.

TERESA.

Hast thou heard,
If not Alonzo, who this stranger is?

SEBASTIAN.

His garb bespeaks him native of the East.
But from whatever clime the warrior comes,

E 2

I hope,

I hope, my Princess! that he comes in vain.
 Another warrior, and of Spanish race,
 Now claims the combat for his native land.

ORMISINDA.

Of Spanish race! Who is this Knight of Spain?

SEBASTIAN.

A wonder! never was his equal seen,
 For daring valour and address in arms.
 He has not yet attain'd the prime of youth,
 His look partakes more of the boy than man,
 But he hath vanquish'd men. This day the Moors
 Have felt his hand.

ORMISINDA.

Ha! Is it he, Sebastian,
 Who was the author of the late alarm?

SEBASTIAN.

The fame.

ORMISINDA.

And whence does this young hero come?

SEBASTIAN.

From Catalonia. In the deserts there
 His fire, obscure, tho' once a warrior, dwells.

ORMISINDA.

From Catalonia! In the desert bred!
 Teresa! All that's possible I fear:
 What if this youth—

TERESA. [*To Ormisinda.*]

O! think how many youths
Of Spanish race in Catalonia dwell,
Be recollected whilst I ask Sebastian
A question that at once all doubt resolves.

[*To Sebastian.*]

Has this youth no name? Hast thou not heard
How he is call'd?

SEBASTIAN.

He calls himself Alberto.

ORMISINDA.

Mother of God!

TERESA. [*To Her.*]

Beware!—The Princess grieves,

[*To Sebastian.*]

That Spain depriv'd of great Alonzo's aid,
Should rest her safety on a stripling's arm.

ORMISINDA.

No judge of warriors or of combats I;
But sure this youth, tho' ne'er so brave and bold,
Of tender years, who has not reach'd his prime,
Is most unfit to cope with strong Mirmallon.

SEBASTIAN.

Heroes must not be judg'd by common rules.
Irregular like comets in their course,
Who can compute the period when they shine?
Lady! if thou had'st seen this gallant youth,
If thou had'st heard him, when oblig'd to speak,

In

In self-defence, he told his wond'rous deeds,
 As if he thought them nothing : Thy faint heart
 Would from his fire have caught the flame of hope,
 Thou would'st, even as thy royal father did,
 Believe he was created and ordain'd,
 By Heav'n supreme, the champion of his country.

TERESA.

Sebastian, go, and find this gallant youth.
 Tell him, the Princess, partial to the brave,
 Desires his presence.

SEBASTIAN.

Gladly I obey.

[Exit SEBASTIAN.]

ORMISINDA.

He's gone. Now I may speak. My son ! my son !
 My hope, my comfort, in despair and death !
 The only star in my dark sky that shone !
 Must thy unhappy mother live to see
 Thy light extinguish'd ? I will not permit
 This most unequal combat. I'll proclaim
 My fatal story, and declare his birth.

TERESA.

Think what must follow. Absolute perdition !

ORMISINDA.

Is not his death perdition ? Can he meet
 The Moor and live ? How should his tender youth
 Resist the giant, who has overthrown

Squadrons entire, and trampled on the necks
Of firmest warriors?

TERESA.

'Tis not yet decreed
That he shall fight the Moor. The stranger knight,
Who was at first mistaken for Alonzo,
Comes not so far, without a name in arms,
To gain the suffrage of the Peers of Spain,
When once that name is known.

ORMISINDA.

Teresa, no.

My fate has still one even tenor held,
From bad to worse. When I had fram'd my mind
To one disaster, then a greater came.
I had made death familiar to my thoughts ;
I could embrace the spectre like a friend :
But still I kept a corner of my heart
Safe and untouch'd. My dearest child was there :
Amidst the ruins of the wife and queen,
The mother stood secure. O thou Alonzo !
If yet thine eyes behold the light of day,
What sorrow and remorse must be thy portion,
When thou shalt hear—Now promise me, Teresa,
That when my son and I are laid in dust,
(For each event accelerates our doom)
Thou wilt seek out and find this cruel man,
Tell him how Spain, the kingdom of his fathers,
By him deserted, was for ever lost :

How

How his forsaken wife in honour died—
 But that's not much---for me he will not mourn.
 Then tell him of his son, to wring his heart !
 Truly describe the boy ! how brave he was !
 How beautiful ! how from the cloud obscure
 In which his careful mother had involv'd him,
 He burst the champion of his native land :
 Then tell him how the springing hero fell
 Beneath a stronger arm, fighting for Spain,
 And for his mother ; fighting with the foe
 His father should have fought, and could have
 vanquish'd !

TERESA.

Sebastian comes.

Enter SEBASTIAN.

SEBASTIAN.

All is revers'd again :
 The stranger knight is for Abdallah known,
 The Persian prince, Alonzo's chosen friend,
 His only equal in the strife of arms.
 To him the combat is decided.

OR MISINDA.

I know

His story well ; he is the Sophy's son,
 The eldest born and Persia's rightful heir ;
 But by his mother's zeal a Christian bred :
 True to his faith, he lost his father's throne.
 What says he of Alonzo ?

SEBASTIAN.

Sent by him,

The brave Abdallah comes to fight for Spain.
They march'd together, from the falls of Nile
To Damietta. There a wound receiv'd
In Asia's wars broke out, and forc'd Alonzo,
Full of regret, in Egypt to remain.
His friend for him appears. The king, thy father,
With all his peers, in honour of the prince,
Go forth to meet him.

ORMISINDA.

Hast thou seen Alberto?

SEBASTIAN.

I have, and told him what I had in charge;
Then hasten'd hither to report these tidings,
At which Alberto droops.

TERESA.

Return, I pray,
To my apartment guide the young Alberto.
The princess will be there. [Exit Sebastian.]

Did not I say,

Alonzo never would abandon Spain?
Abdallah comes to conquer in his name.
Now I can read the characters of fate,
And spell the will of Heav'n. This boy of yours
Will win your husband back. When he beholds
The image of his valour so express,
His heart will melt. The husband and the father
Will rush upon him with a flood of joy.

F

ORMISINDA.

Is he not like him? Mark his coming forth!
Behold Alonzo in his daring son!
Full of the spirit of his warlike fire,
His birth unknown, he felt his princely mind,
Advanced undaunted on the edge of war,
And claim'd the post of danger for his own.

TERESA.

A mother's tongue cannot exceed the truth
In praising him. There never was a prince,
Since old Iberia first excell'd in arms,
Broke out with so much lustre on mankind.
But in this interview with prudence check
The transport of affection from thy son.
Cautious conceal the secret of his birth.
Safest he is while to himself unknown.

ORMISINDA.

How could his faithful guardian let him go?
Perhaps the brave Costollo lives no more.

TERESA.

Alberto will inform thee.

ORMISINDA.

Not Alberto;
Alonzo is his name. I go to meet him.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE I.

A view of the country near the city.

Enter ABDALLAH.

O! CITY! once the seat of all I lov'd!
O! hills and dales! haunts of my youthful
days!

O! scenes well known! unalter'd you remain.

But I approach you with an alter'd mind,

Hate what I lov'd, and loath what I desir'd.

Intolerable state! My soul is void!

A chaos without form. Why, nature, why!

Art thou so watchful o'er the brutal tribes,

And yet so careless of the human race.

By certain instinct beasts and birds discern

Their proper food: For them the fairest fruit

Untouch'd, if pois'nous, withers on the bough:

But man, by a fair outside, still deceiv'd,

And by his boasted reason more betray'd,

Gives the affection of his soul to beauty,

Devours the deadly bane.

Enter VELASCO.

My Lord! Thy people,

Where thou commanded'st, halt, and wait thy
coming.

ABDALLAH.

'Tis well ! I wish'd to speak with thee alone.
Velasco ! tho' to thee but little known,
I did in part reveal my secret soul,
Told thee the feign'd Abdallah was Alonzo.
Further than that, thou hast not sought to know,
Tho' many a lonely hour we two have worn
On sea and shore, that some men would have thought
Most opportune.

VELASCO.

My Lord ! There are some men
Who having once been trusted with a little,
Avail themselves of that, some more to learn,
And penetrate the bosom of a friend,
Even with the wedge his easiness had furnish'd—
Such men should not be trusted.

ABDALLAH.

True, Velasco !
But thou art not like them : I have observ'd thee,
Warm in affection, but in temper cool :
A steady judgment guides thee thro' the world.
Thy gen'rous mind pursues the path of honour,
Unbias'd and unmov'd.

VELASCO.

From early youth,
The chosen confident of my companions,
I never yet from perfidy betray'd,
From babling vanity, divulg'd a secret.

ABDALLAH.

I have a tale to tell, that will amaze,
Confound, and strike thee dumb. The deserts vast
Of Asia and of Africa have heard it.
The rocky cliffs of Caucasus and Atlas
Have echo'd my complaints : But never yet
The human ear receiv'd them. Thou hast heard
Already more than ever mortal did.
Thou know'st the princess ?

VELASCO.

Ormifinda !

ABDALLAH.

Her.

VELASCO.

Not many of the court have been more honour'd
With opportunities to know her worth ;
And there is none who more her worth reveres.

ABDALLAH.

Her worth ! Thou may'st as well revere a fiend,
The blackest fiend, that dwells in burning hell,
Is not more opposite to all that's good
Than Ormifinda.

VELASCO.

What a strain is this ?

ABDALLAH.

'Tis true, by every high and holy name,
That binds a soldier's and a prince's vow :

I swear,

I swear, Velasco, she's the vilest woman
That e'er disgrac'd her sex. The most abandon'd,
The hardiest, most determin'd in her vice,
That ever wrong'd a fond believing heart.

VELASCO.

Great God!

ABDALLAH.

You start and shudder like a man
Struck with a heavy blow.

VELASCO.

And so I am.

ABDALLAH.

And now you lift your eye-lids up and stare
With looks full of conjecture and suspicion,
As if you doubted of my sober mind.
I am not mad, Velasco, tho' sometimes
I have been near, yes, very near to madness;
By that bad woman craz'd.

VELASCO.

O! Would to heav'n!

That this afflicting moment of my life
Were a delirious dream! Unreal all
That's heard and spoken now! But how, my Lord,
Art thou so much affected by her crimes?

ABDALLAH.

I am her husband.

VELASCO.

Heav'n for that be prais'd !

ABDALLAH.

How dar'st thou thus profane the name of heav'n
And mock my misery ? Thou art mad, I think ;
The frenzy which thou wish'd'st has come upon thee,
Beware, for if this extasy endures,
My sword secures thy silence.

VELASCO.

O ! forgive me,
Noble Alonzo, royal, I should say,
Doubly my master now. There's not a man,
Whose veins contain one drop of Spanish blood,
Who does not wish thee wedded to the princess.
And for her virtue ! Thou hast long been absent,
And know'st not what an angel's life she leads !
Reserv'd, retired, and sad. I'll stake my soul,
Some villain has belied thy faithful wife,
And snar'd thy easy faith.

ABDALLAH.

Take heed, take heed !
I am the villain who accuse the princess,
And thou shalt be her judge.

VELASCO.

Eternal power ;
What shall I think of this ?

ALONZO.

ABDALLAH.

Listen to me.

I have perplex'd thee, and have marr'd the story
 By my abruptness. 'Tis a serious story,
 Not to be told in parcels and by starts,
 As I from impotence of mind began,
 But I will bear my swelling passion down,
 And utter all my shame. Thou dost remember
 How I was banished from my native land?

VELASCO.

For killing young Ramirez.

ABDALLAH.

At that time

I doated on the princess. She conjur'd me
 With earnest pray'rs, with deluges of tears
 Not to resist her father, nor advance
 My better title to the crown of Spain,
 As I had once resolv'd. My rage she footh'd;
 Pride, anger, int'rest, yielded all to love.
 With her I made a merit of obedience,
 And pleaded so effectually my cause,
 That she consented to a private marriage,
 Before I left the kingdom. We were married,
 And met together, four successive nights,
 In the sequestered cottage of the wood,
 Behind the palace garden. O! I thought
 Myself the happiest and the most belov'd
 Of all mankind. She mock'd me all the while;

Meant me the cover of her loose amours,
A cloak to hide her shame. O God! O God!
Did I deserve no better?

VELASCO.

Good my Lord!

What circumstance to warrant such conclusion?
What evidence?

ABDALLAH.

The evidence of sight—

Mine eyes beheld: I saw myself dishonour'd.

VELASCO.

Your eyes beheld!

ABDALLAH.

By Heav'n and Hell—they did!

The night preceding the appointed day
Of my departure from the realm of Spain,
I flew impatient to the place of meeting,
Before the hour was come: To wear away
The tedious time, for ev'ry minute seem'd
An age to me, I struck into the wood
And wander'd there, still steering to the gate
By which she was to enter. Thro' the trees
The moon full orb'd in all her glory shone.
My am'rous mind a sportful purpose form'd,
Unseen to watch the coming of my bride,
And wantonly surprize her. Near the gate
There stood an aged tree. It was a beech,
Which far and wide stretch'd forth its level arms

G

Low,

Low, near the ground, and form'd a gloomy shade.
 Behind its trunk I took my secret stand;
 The gate was full in view, and the green path
 On which it open'd. There I stood a while,
 And soon I heard the turning of the key.
 My heart beat thick with joy---and forth she came:—
 Not as I wish'd: She had a minion with her,
 A handsome youth was tripping by her side,
 Girt with a sword, and dress'd in gay attire.
 He seem'd to court her, as they pass'd along,
 Coy, but not angry, for I heard her laugh.
 She flung away. He follow'd, soon o'ertook her,
 Embrac'd her—

VELASCO.

Ah! The Princess' Ormifinda!

ABD ALLAH.

I drew my sword, that I remember well,
 And then an interval like death ensued.
 When consciousness return'd, I found myself
 Stretch'd at my length upon the naked ground
 Under the tree: My sword lay by my side.
 The sudden shock, the transport of my rage,
 And grief, had stopt the current of my blood,
 And made a pause of life.

VELASCO.

Alas! my Lord!

'Twas piteous indeed. What did'st thou do,
 When life and sense return'd?

ABDALLAH.

With life and sense,
My rage return'd. Stumbling with haste, I ran
To sacrifice them to my just revenge.
But whether they had heard my heavy fall,
Or that my death-like swoon had lasted long,
I know not, but I never saw them more.
I search'd till morning; then away I went,
Resolv'd to scorn the strumpet, and forget her.
But I have not been able to forget
Nor to despise her; tho' I hate her more
Than e'er I lov'd her, still her image haunts me
Where'er I go. I think of nothing else
When I'm awake, and never shut my eyes
But she's the certain vision of my dream.
Sometimes, in all her loveliness she comes
Without her crimes: In extasy I wake,
And with the vision had endur'd for ever.
For these deceitful moments, O! my friend!
Are the sole pleasant moments which Alonzo
For eighteen years has known.

VELASCO.

Within that time,
What regions barbarous hast thou explor'd,
What strange vicissitudes of life endur'd
In action and repose.

ABDALLAH.

Extremes of both
I courted to relieve my tortur'd mind:

G 2

But

But the tormenter still my steps attends ;
 Behind me mounts, when thro' the ranks of war
 I drive my fiery steed ; and when I seek
 The hermit's cell, the fiend pursues me there.
 Time, which they say the wounds of passion cures
 In other hearts, inflames and festers mine.
 There's but one remedy.

VELASCO.

Would I could name one !

ABDALLAH.

Her life. The unction for the serpent's bite
 Is the fell serpent's blood. I'll have her life.
 Th' adulterers with infamy shall die,
 By public justice doom'd. With this intent
 Disguis'd I come. If in my proper shape
 I had appear'd, alarm'd she would have fled,
 And baffled my revenge.

VELASCO.

My Lord, permit me
 One thing to mention, which these eyes beheld,
 Altho' it squares not just with thy opinion,

ABDALLAH.

Opinion !

VELASCO.

Good my Lord ! with patience hear,
 When first I was to this employment nam'd,
 Which since I have so happily discharg'd,
 The Princess sent and call'd me to her presence.

The

The treaty with the Moor engross'd her thoughts,
That sad and pensive air she always wears
Was settled to a thicker gloom of grief.
Her voice was low and languid. Few her words,
And the short periods ended with a sigh.
But when I gave her hopes of thy return,
A sudden gleam of joy spread o'er her face,
Like morning breaking in a cloudy sky.
With earnest voice, still rising as she spoke,
She urg'd dispatch, exhorted me to zeal
And perseverance. Never to desist
Till I had found thee: For her fate, she said,
The fate of Spain, depended on Alonzo.
Her passion then burst in a flood of tears
That choak'd her utterance.

ABDALLAH.

And thou didst believe
That ev'ry word she spoke was most sincere.
How to interpret her let me instruct thee.
Whate'er she utters with unusual warmth,
As the effusion genuine of her heart,
Receive and construe in another sense
Reverse and opposite; for that's the truth.
The words she spoke, her sighs, the tears she shed,
Were all from apprehension of my coming,
Not as they seem'd, for fear I should not come.

VELASCO.

'Tis dreadful that,

ABDALLAH.

'Tis horrible, 'tis monstrous!

When I for her had wav'd my right to reign,
The right undoubted of the Gothic line,
And stoop'd, enamour'd, to that base decree
From Spain, which banish'd the true heir of Spain,
That she should pitch on me to be her fool,
And pour such infinite contempt upon me.
But four days married! Fond, to madness fond!
And on the very eve of my departure!
She would not for a single day refrain,
But rush'd to prostitution!

VELASCO.

I have heard

Stories and tales enough of female falshood,
Some that were true, and others that were feign'd,
By spiteful wits maliciously devis'd.
But this surpasses all.

ABDALLAH.

All wicked women

Compar'd with her are faints. She is a foil
To set them off, and make their foulness fair.
In her incontinence she stands unrivall'd,
Burning in fires peculiar to herself,
Phoenix in lewdness.

VELASCO.

May I ask my Lord

How he intends?—But see, the King draws near.

ABDALLAH.

He's much impair'd.

VELASCO.

When sore affliction comes
In the decline of life! 'tis like a storm
Which in the rear of autumn shakes the tree
That frost had touch'd before; and strips it bare
Of all its leaves.

(Enter the KING with attendants.)

(As he advances, speaks to VELASCO.)

KING.

We thank thy care, Velasco!

To ABDALLAH.

Illustrious Prince! whom love of glory brings
From regions so remote, to fight for Spain,
Accept the thanks a grateful nation pays
To her defender.

ABDALLAH.

Monarch of Asturia!
The nations of the East have heard thy praise.
Had not the hand of time unstrung thine arm,
Spain never would have fought for foreign aid
To quell her foes.

KING.

'Tis better far for Spain
That I am old: For in my warlike days,
When in the prime of flow'ring youth I fought,
I equall'd not thy friend. Above his own,

Above

Above the strength of ev'ry mortal arm
Alonzo thine exalts.

ABDALLAH.

Three times we fought
With equal fortune on the Wolga's banks ;
He for the Monguls, I against them stood.
But at our last encounter, on my helm
His faithless blade broke short, and in his hand
The useless hilt remain'd. My sword I dropt,
And in my arms the valiant chief embrac'd.
Our friendship thus commenc'd, and since that time
We have been brothers sworn, and leagu'd in arms.
Alonzo, fighting in my cause, receiv'd
That wound which now detains him from the field.
Urg'd by affection, and by honour bound,
For him I come against the foes of Spain.
But of myself more than enough is said ;
'Tis time to act. The Moorish knight, I hear,
Is in the lists already.

KING.

Prince of Persia !
The terms to thee are known.

ABDALLAH.

The first of men
With pride such honors might from Spain receive ;
But never can these honors grace Abdallah.
Long since my heart and hand were giv'n away ;
And tho' the custom of the East permits
Unnumber'd consorts, me my faith restrains.

But

But if victorious in the strife of death,
I have an earnest and a just request
To thee, O King! which, at a proper time,
I shall be bold to make.

KING.

Whate'er it is,
I pledge my honor and my faith, to grant it.

Enter SEBASTIAN and ALBERTO.

(ALBERTO goes on to the KING.)

KING.

Advance, Alberto! to the Prince himself,
Deliver thou thy message and the present.

ALBERTO.

Great Sir! the Princess Ormisinda greets
The gen'rous champion of her country's cause,
Wishes that victory may sit to day,
And ev'ry day of battle, on his sword.
This costly bracelet from her arm she sends
To prince Abdallah, to Alonzo's friend.

ABDALLAH:

(Looking stedfastly on ALBERTO.)

The Princess is most bountiful, as thou,
Who hast the honor to attend her, know'st.
Her gracious present humbly I accept,
And thank her for her goodness to Alonzo,
Who will be proud to be by her remember'd.
The combat ended, I propose to pay
My homage to her beauty. At this time

H

My

My mind is in the lifts.—The Moorish knight
Will think me tardy. *(To the KING.)*

KING.

Let our trumpets sound
A sprightly charge. The warrior's heart beats time
To that brave music. Onward from this place
A path direct to thy pavilion leads.

(The KING turns and gives orders.)

ABDALLAH *(to VELASCO.)*

Another minion! View him well, Velasco.
How insolent! See what a crest he rears,
Elated with her favour. O! vile woman!
Infatiate and inconstant.

VELASCO.

Ah! my Lord!
Truce with such thoughts! Sure this is not a time!
The combat claims a cool and present mind.

ABDALLAH.

Fear not the combat.

VELASCO.

Thou art waited for;
The King himself intends with thee to walk.
[Exeunt: Abdallah looking back at Alberto.]

(Manent ALBERTO, SEBASTIAN.)

ALBERTO.

That Prince of Persia is compos'd of pride;
He did not deign to look upon the present,

But

But stretch'd his sun-burnt hand straight out before
 him,
 Like a blind man, and would have stood so still,
 Had I not made his fingers feel the pearls.
 And all the while he star'd me in the face,
 As if he meant t'oppress me with his eye,
 And fright me with his fierce and uncouth looks.
 I blush'd at first, but anger came at last,
 And bore me up.

SEBASTIAN.

Those princes of the East,
 Us'd to the servile manners of their country,
 Where ev'ry prostrate slave adores his lord,
 Without intention shock the sons of Europe.

ALBERTO.

O! how unlike to him the King of Spain,
 And that most gentle Princess, Ormisinda!
 Her look, her voice, benign and mild, dispel
 The awe her rank inspires, and reassure
 The modest mind. Would'st thou believe, Sebastian,
 She talk'd to me, I cannot tell how long,
 Before thou cam'st, and question'd me minutely
 How I had liv'd, how past my youthful days?
 I fear I was too copious in my answers.
 What signifies my rural life to her?
 And yet she seem'd to listen with delight,
 As if she had an int'rest in my fate;
 And once or twice when I of danger spoke,

H 2

From

From which I hardly had escap'd with life,
Methought I saw her tremble. Much she blam'd
My rashness; yet she prais'd my courage too.
With all her tenderness of heart, I see
That she admires true valour.

SEBASTIAN.

So she does.
The bravest knight that e'er was clad in steel,
Alonzo, was the lover of her youth:
And since he left this land she ne'er rejoic'd.
But of these matters I will tell thee more
At a convenient season. Let us follow,
And join the train before they reach the lists.

ALBERTO.

I would not lose one moment of this fight
For half the lands of Spain. Tho' I abhor
The Persian, yet I pray devoutly for him.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

*The City.**Enter ORMISINDA and TERESA.*

ORMISINDA.

THIS city looks as if a pestilence
Had swept the whole inhabitants away.
The solitary streets, the empty squares,
Appall me more than the deserted palace.
Let us go back again.

TERESA.

'Tis time we should.
You tremble at the howling of a dog,
That broke the silence and increas'd the horror.
If we stay here we shall be fancy-struck,
Mistake some statue for a pale-fac'd ghost,
And think it beckons with its marble arm.

ORMISINDA.

Why should this desolation frighten me?
Why should I fear to see a grave-clad ghost,
Who may so soon be number'd with the dead,
And be myself a ghost? What noise is that?
Did'st thou not hear, Teresa?

TERESA.

Yes, I did.

I heard an uncouth sound.

ORMISINDA.

Uncouth indeed!

An universal groan! Hark! there again.

TERESA.

'Tis not the same. This has another tone,
A shout of triumph, and a burst of joy.

ORMISINDA.

The combat's over, and my fate's determin'd.
Now death or life!

[The trumpets sound.]

TERESA.

Long may the Princess live!
And every hour be fortunate as this!
The Spanish trumpets sound, the sign I know
Thy champion has prevail'd.

ORMISINDA.

O gracious Heav'n!
The lists are near, and we shall quickly learn.

TERESA.

Look yonder, flying swifter than the wind,
A horseman comes; now at the gate he lights,
And hastes across the square. It is Sebastian.
His look, his gesture, speak his tidings good,

[Enter SEBASTIAN.]

SEBASTIAN.

Joy to the Princess! Victory and peace!
The Moor is slain by brave Abdallah's hand.

ORMISINDA.

Blest be thy tongue, Sebastian! Thou shalt find
Some better recompence than barren thanks
For these glad tidings. But the gen'rous Prince
Who fought for Spain——

SEBASTIAN.

Safe and without a wound,
Fresh for another foe, Abdallah stands.
Short was the combat: Soon the boaster fell,
Who durst defy the Christian world to arms.

ORMISINDA.

The God of battles, whom Abdallah serves,
Has overthrown the infidel, whose trust
Was in his own right arm.

SEBASTIAN.

If I should live
Ten thousand years, I never could forget
The solemn prelude and the fierce encounter.
Thou know'st the place appointed for the combat,
An amphitheatre by nature form'd.

ORMISINDA.

I know it well.

SEBASTIAN.

The hills, of various slope
And shape, which circle round the spacious plain,
I Were

Were cover'd with a multitude immense
Of either sex, of every age and rank,
Christian and Moor; whose faces and attire
Strangely diversified the living scene.
Within the lists a gallery was rais'd
In which thy father and the Moorish prince
Sate with their peers, the judges of the field.
To them the knights with slow and stately pace
Approach'd; and bound by sacred oaths declar'd
That they no charm nor incantation us'd,
But trusted in their valour and their arms.
With low obeisance then they both fell back;
And first the Moor (for he the challenge gave)
March'd to the middle of the list'd field;
There seiz'd his ponderous mace, beneath whose
weight,
The brawny bearer bow'd; and round his head,
Like a light foil, he flourish'd it in air.
On him with diff'rent thoughts the nations gaz'd.
But suddenly a flash of light and flame
Struck ev'ry eye from brave Abdallah's shield,
Cover'd till then. 'Twas made of polish'd steel,
Which shone like adamant; and to a point
Rose in the centre, slanting on each side.
This shield the Persian Prince advancing bore
On his left arm outstretch'd, and in his right,
Thrown back a little, gleam'd a pointed sword.
Erect and high the bold Mirmallon stood,
And sternly ey'd his near-approaching foe.
They forward sprung, and on the flaming shield
Discharg'd a mighty blow, enough to crush

A wall,

A wall, or split a rock. The Spaniards gave
A general groan.

ORMISINDA.

That was the dreadful sound
We heard, Terefa.

SEBASTIAN.

Glancing from the shield,
Aside the mace descended. Then enrag'd,
Once more the Moor his thund'ring weapon rear'd,
In stept the Prince, and raising high his shield,
Midway he met the blow; and with the strength
And vigour of his arm, obliquely down
The pond'rous mace he drove. Then quick as
thought,
His better hand and foot at once advancing,
Plung'd in Mirmallon's throat his thirsty blade.
The giant stagger'd for a little space;
Then falling, shook the earth. The Christians rais'd
A shout that rent the air. Away I came,
Happy to be the bearer of such tidings.

[Trumpet.

ORMISINDA.

Behold, they come in triumph from the field.
O! glorious man! And yet forgive me, Heav'n,
I grudge the conquest to Alonzo's friend,
And wish Alonzo in Abdallah's place.

Enter the KING, ABDALLAH, VELASCO,
ALBERTO, &c.

ABDALLAH. [To Velasco.]
See where she stands. O Heavens!

I

A L O N Z O.

VELASCO.

My Lord Alonzo,

Compose thy thoughts.

ABDALLAH.

Behold her how she looks,

As if she knew no ill. That harden'd heart
Against remorse and fear and shame is arm'd;
But I shall wring it now.

KING.

Daughter, draw near!

This godlike Prince all recompence disclaims,
Save thanks from Spain. The pleasing task be thine
To greet the saviour of thy native land,
And speak our gratitude.

ORMISINDA.

No words can speak

The gratitude I feel. Believe it great
As my deliverance, vast as my distress!
Like sad Andromeda, chain'd to the rock
I stood a living prey, when this brave Prince,
Came like another Perseus from the sky,
And sav'd me from destruction. I forget,
Wrapt in myself, the charge my father gave
To thank the saviour of my native land;
Another voice shall give thee thanks for Spain,
Alonzo's voice shall thank thee for his country,
His friends, his people—sav'd.

ABDALLAH.

Ah! If I hear (*Aside.*)

This syren longer, she will charm my rage;

But

But I remember where I heard her last.
 Princess of Spain! I merit not thy praise.
 Sent by Alonzo to this land I came:
 What has been done, for Him I have perform'd.
 Now of his promise I remind the King
 To grant me one request.

KING.

Speak! It is granted.

ORMISINDA.

If I conjecture right, even that request
 Will prove one favour more on Spain conferr'd.

ABDALLAH.

Perhaps it may.

KING.

Proceed, illustrious Prince!
 And make me happy to fulfil thy wish.

ABDALLAH.

Not for myself I speak, but for my friend;
 And in his name, whose person I sustain,
 I ask for justice on a great offender.

KING.

Thou shalt have ample and immediate justice.
 Nor favour nor affinity shall screen
 The guilty person. Prince, why art thou troubled?
 Thou shak'st from head to foot. Thy quiv'ring lip
 Is pale with passion. On thy forehead stand
 Big drops. Almighty God! What dreadful birth
 Do these strong pangs portend?

ABDALLAH.

The guilty person,
Whom with a capital offence I charge,
Stands by thy side.

KING.

My daughter !

ABDALLAH.

Yes ! thy daughter !
'Tis her I mean, the Princess Ormisinda.
Here in the presence of the Peers of Spain,
I charge her with a crime, whose doom the laws
Of Spain have wrote in blood : Adultery.
I read astonishment in ev'ry face !
Who would suspect that one so highly born,
With ev'ry outward mark of virtue grac'd,
Had giv'n her honour to a worthless wretch,
And driv'n a noble husband to despair !

KING.

Am I awake ! Is this the light of day ?
Art thou, O ! Prince, with sudden frenzy seiz'd ?
Or is the madness mine ? Renown'd Abdallah !
What answer can be made to such a charge ?
This strange demand of justice on my daughter,
For an offence that she could not commit ?
My daughter ne'er was married.

ABDALLAH.

Ask her that ?
Hear if she will deny she has a husband ?

KING.

My child, thou art amaz'd !

ORMISINDA.

No, not so much

As thou wilt be, my father, when thou hear'st
Thy daughter's tongue confess she has a husband.

KING.

Haft thou a husband ! God of heav'n and earth !
Since thou hast thus dissembled with thy father,
Perhaps thou hast deceiv'd thy husband too.
Who is thy husband ? Speak !

ORMISINDA.

The Prince Alonzo.

KING.

And hast thou been so long in secret wedded ?
'Tis eighteen years since he departed hence.

ORMISINDA.

O ! I have reason to remember that.
There is no calendar so just and true
As the sad mem'ry of a wife forsaken.
The years, the months, the weeks, the very days,
Are reckon'd, register'd, recorded there !
And of that period I could cite such times,
So dolorous, distressful, melancholy,
That the bare mention of them would excite
Amazement how I live to tell the tale.
But I forget the present in the past.
No wonder, for this moment is the first
That opes the sluices of a heart o'ercharg'd,

And

And bursting with a flood of grief conceal'd.
 But I must turn me to another theme.
 The earnest eyes of all are bent on me,
 Watching my looks, and prying to discern
 Symptoms of innocence or signs of guilt.
 Hear then the frank confession of my soul :
 I have transgress'd.

KING.

Stain of a noble race !
 Dost thou avow thy crime ?

ORMISINDA.

Mistake me not,
 I have transgress'd my duty to my father :
 Without his knowledge, and against his will,
 Mov'd by a tender lover's parting tears,
 I join'd myself in wedlock to Alonzo.
 My King, my father, pardon the offence,
 Which against thee I own I have committed :
 But may I ne'er of God or man be pardon'd,
 Nor friend nor father ever pity me,
 If I have swerv'd one step from virtue's path,
 Or broke the smallest parcel of that vow
 Which binds a faithful wife ! O ! Prince of Persia !
 Thou art the best of friends and benefactors ;
 Thou com'st to end my most distracting woes,
 And to dispel th' impenetrable cloud
 That darken'd all my days. Now I shall know
 Why I have been abandon'd and forsaken,
 Why I have been detested and despis'd,

As

As never woman was. Proceed, my Lord.
 And whilst thou keenly dost assail my life,
 And, dearer far, my honor and my fame,
 Secure in innocence, I'll calmly hear.
 From thee, I hope, the end of all my cares.

ABDALLAH.

Even thus Alonzo told me she would speak,
 And thus proclaim her innocence.

ORMISINDA.

Did He ?

O ! would to Heav'n Alonzo heard me now,
 Fearless defend his honor and my own !
 My voice, which once was music to his ear,
 Like David's harp which sooth'd the gloomy king,
 Would charm his malady, would drive away
 The evil spirit, and call back again
 The better genius of his early days.
 O ! thou that wert so good, so great ! admir'd
 Of all mankind ! my lov'd, my lost Alonzo !
 For thee, in this humiliating hour,
 More than myself I mourn.

ABDALLAH. (*Half aside.*)

Eternal Power !

To whom the secrets of all hearts are known !
 Hear, hear this woman, and between us judge !
 'Tis not my business to contend with words,
 These are the conquering arms of womankind.
 A nobler course of trial lies before me :
 In a wrong'd husband's name I charge this lady
 With infidelity ; and crave the doom

Of law upon her head. If any knight,
Spaniard or stranger, dares assert her cause,
Let him stand forth, and take my gauntlet up ;
Which on the ground I throw, my gage to prove
That she is false to honor and Alonzo.

ORMISINDA.

Before the gage of death is lifted up,
Hear me one moment. By Alonzo sent,
Thou com'st instructed in Alonzo's wrongs.
Let me conjure thee then, by all that's dear,
By all that's sacred to the great and brave,
Thy mother's memory, thy consort's fame,
Not on a gen'ral charge, obscure and vague,
To which there is no answer but denial,
To found the claim of combat : Single out
What circumstance thou wilt of special note,
Of such a kind as may be tried and known
For true or false. Tell us at least his name
With whom Alonzo's wife her honor stain'd,
And let us be confronted.

[*Young ALBERTO steps forth.*]

ALBERTO.

Heaven forbid
That thou should'st be confronted with a villain.
Princess of Spain ! Be sure some wretch there is,
Some renegado, false to God and man,
Suborn'd, and ready with a lying tongue,
To second this brave Prince who wrongs thy fame,
And wounds thy modest ear. Too much by far
Already thou hast heard. Pretended Prince !

For

For there is nothing royal in thy foul!
 Thou base defamer of a lady's name!
 I take thy gauntlet up, and hold it high
 In scorn, and fierce defiance, to thy face,
 My gage to prove thy accusation false,
 And thee, the author of a tale invented
 To rob a noble lady of her fame.

ORMISINDA.

Where am I now? What shall I do, Teresa?

[Aside.]

TERESA.

The God of heaven direct thee!

ABDALLAH.

Boy! To thee

I answer nothing. I suspect the cause
 Of thy presumption, and could wish that Spain
 Had giv'n a worthier victim to my sword.

[Walks aside.]

ORMISINDA.

O! valiant youth! much am I bound to thee:
 But I have reasons that import the state,
 Which shall, whatever is my fate, be known,
 And own'd hereafter to be great and weighty,
 Why I decline th' assistance of thy sword.
 If this appeal to combat is the law,
 And I can find no champion but Alberto,
 Without the chance of combat let me fall,
 For I will not accept——

K

ALBERTO.

Recall these words,.

Too gen'rous Princess! I can read thy thoughts :
Thou think'st my youth unequal to the foe ;
Thou fear'st the weakness of Alberto's arm.
My strength exceeds the promise of my years.
Oft' have I bent the bow, and drawn the sword,
Nor fly my shafts, nor falls my sword in vain.
This day against a troop alone I fought ;
But never did I fight in such a cause,
Nor was I e'er so certain to prevail.
A fire divine invades my zealous breast :
I feel the force of legions in mine arm.
Thy innocence has made thy champion strong !
The God of battle is our righteous judge ;
And let the cause be tried.

(A warrior armed, with his helmet on, steps forth.)

WARRIOR.

But not by thee !

Thy father's voice forbids, too daring youth ;
Stand back, and let thy master in the art
Of war, now claim the combat for his own.
My liege !

KING.

That voice I know : Thy figure too
Resembles much a chief, lamented long
As slain in battle.

WARRIOR.

I am he, Costollo.

'Tis true, O! King! that on the field I fell,
Fighting for Spain. How I was sav'd from death,
And where, for many years I have remain'd,
This is no time to tell. This hour demands
A soldier's speech, brief prologue to his deeds.
On me, proud Persian! turn thy gloomy eyes,
Hear me, and let thy ready sword reply.
With hell-born malice, level'd at her life,
Thou hast defam'd a Princess, honour'd, lov'd,
By all, who virtue or fair honour love.
The fell Hyæna, native of thy land,
Has not a voice or heart more false than thine,
Thou counterfeit of truth! whom I defy
To mortal combat, and the proof of arms.
Thy full-blown fame, thy unexhausted strength,
Deceitful confidence, I laugh to scorn;
The conquering cause is mine.

ALBERTO.

My lord, the King!

And ye his counsellors for wisdom fam'd!
You will not sure permit this good old man,
By fond affection for his son impell'd,
To meet so stern a foe. His hoary head,
His wither'd veins, are symptoms of decay.
Lean not upon a reed which time hath bruis'd,
Nor trust the life and honour of the Princess
To the weak arm of age.

ABDALLAH.

I'll fight you both,
Father and son at once. Together come,
Tongue-valiant men! and try Abdallah's arm.
I'll have it so; for both of you have dar'd,
Ignoble as you are, to match yourselves
Against a Prince who moves not in your sphere,
And utter words for which such blood as yours
Is poor atonement.

COSTOLLO.

Ev'ry word thou speak'st
Is insolent and false. Son of a slave!
For eastern monarchs buy with gold their brides,
The blood by thee despis'd, flows from a source
Purer than thine and nobler.

ALBERTO.

Nay, my father!
That's said too far. Fierce and disdainful Prince,
Vain is the offer which thy passion makes.
Perhaps the conqueror of the Moor may find
One Spaniard is enough.

COSTOLLO.

A father's right
Unmov'd I claim, and with determin'd voice
Forbid the combat.

KING.

Hence let us retire
To the pavilion. There our peers shall judge
Of your pretensions.

[Exeunt King and Spaniards.]

ABDALLAH.

Come with me, Velasco.

[Exeunt Abdallah and Velasco.]

(Manent ORMISINDA and TERESA.)

ORMISINDA.

My thoughts are of my son. Mine own estate
Is desp'rate. The husband whom I lov'd,
On whom I doted, and from whom I suffer'd,
What never woman with such patience bore,
Conspires against my honour and my life.
Long cherish'd hope, farewell!

TERESA.

To guard thy son
Defend thyself; and, to prevent the combat,
In thy demand persist. Call the accuser
To circumstance of proof. That is the thread
To lead us thro' this labyrinth perplex'd.
Nor has the Persian thy demand refus'd.

ORMISINDA.

He had not time to speak. Alberto's voice
Broke in like thunder in his mother's cause.
Amidst the anguish of my tortur'd heart,
My soul exults, Teresa! in my son!

When in the pride of valour forth he came,
 And for my sake defied the bold Abdallah,
 His look (he seem'd a cherub in my eyes!)
 His voice (at every word my bosom yearn'd!)
 Transported me so much, that I forgot
 His state and mine, and had well nigh sprung forth
 To clasp my blooming hero in my arms.

TERESA.

No wonder that his mother's soul was mov'd:
 His brave demeanor the spectators charm'd.
 Valour, which sheds a glory round the head
 Of age and ruggedness; how bright its beams
 When in the lovely front of youth they shine!

ORMISINDA.

I've heard of strange and perilous essays
 To try the pureness of suspected virtue.
 I'll undergo whate'er can be devis'd.
 By ordeal trial let my faith be prov'd.
 Blindfold, barefooted, on the smoking foil,
 With red hot plough-shares spread, I'll walk my way;
 Plunge in the boiling oil my naked arm,
 But will not risk my young Alonzo's life.
 The Moorish host hangs o'er our heads no more.
 The heir of Spain shall for himself be known,
 Alonzo's son.

TERESA.

He will not be allow'd
 Alonzo's son, nor yet the heir of Spain,
 Whilst slander's breath sullies his mother's fame.

A L O N Z O.

OR MISINDA.

Now thou hast touch'd a string, to whose deep sound
A mother's heart replies. My son! my son!
I weigh thy virtues down, hang on thy life,
Attaint thy blood, thy birth, thy right to reign!
The birds of prey that dwell among the rocks,
The savage beasts that thro' the deserts roam,
The monsters of the deep, their offspring love,
And to preserve their lives devote their own.
Athwart the gloom, I see a flash of light,
That opens the horizon. I descry
A hand that points a high and lofty path
Which I will boldly tread. Now to my father.
Upon my knees his aid I'll first implore.

[Exeunt.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

ABDALLAH *and* VELASCO.

VELASCO.

BEFORE this day she ne'er beheld the boy.
Far from this place in Catalonia bred,
He came to see the famous combat fought.
'Twas he, my Lord, who slew the Moorish chief,
And in his own defence such wonders wrought.
That action to the Princess made him known,
The rest in honour of his valour follow'd.

ABDALLAH.

How dost thou know?

VELASCO.

With admiration struck,
When he stood forth and brav'd a foe, like thee,
Of divers persons curious I enquir'd,
Who, and from whence he was.

ABDALLAH.

Pity it were
To hurt the stripling. 'Tis a noble boy.
I love the outbreak of his Spanish fire
Against the Moors.

VELASCO.

Ay, and against Abdallah,
Whom antient fame and recent glory rais'd,
Above all mortal men. Spare this young plant,
Who makes so fair a shoot.

ABDALLAH.

How can I spare him?
Should their election send him to my sword,
How, good Velasco?

VELASCO.

When the peers return,
The King, the Princess, with their champion chosen,
Then to the wond'ring audience, in the face
Of her that's guilty, let my Lord relate
The truth-mark'd story he to me has told.
Detected thus, confounded and surpris'd,
Pierc'd with a thousand eyes, that gaze upon her,
And dart conviction; can she still deny,
And by denial, make her guilt ambiguous?
But if her sex's genius is so strong,
That she the port of innocence maintains,
And, from the fulness and excess of vice,
Derives a boldness, that may look like virtue,
Then let the sword decide.

ABDALLAH.

What you propose
Is worth the trial. I am loth to spill
The young Alberto's or Costello's blood:

L

For

For they deserve no harm. Ev'n you, my friend,
Before my hand unclasp'd the book of shame,
Her champion would have been.

VELASCO.

Against the world.

ABDALLAH.

I will adopt the counsel of Velasco,
And probe more deeply still her fester'd mind.
I see 'tis better that she should confess
Her guilt, than with her vanquish'd champion fall,
By doom of law, protesting to the last
Her innocence.

VELASCO.

Better a thousand times.

Her dying voice would shake the hearts of men,
And echo thro' the world.

ABDALLAH.

Behold the King,
And young Alberto marching by his side
As if he trod on air.

VELASCO.

See, Ormisinda
With folded hands implores her list'ning fire.

*Enter the King, Ormisinda, Teresa, Alberto,
Costollo, &c.*

KING.

The peers of Spain have judg'd. Stand forth, Alberto!
Behold the champion of my daughter's fame.

ALBERTO.

Before the trumpet's voice unsheaths the sword
Which one of us shall never sheath again,
Permit me, Prince of Persia, to intreat
A moment's audience. Not from fear I speak.
The cause I fight for, and the mind I bear,
Exalt me far above the thoughts of danger ;
But from a conscious sense of what is due
To thee, renown'd Abdallah. In the heat
Of our contention, if my tongue has utter'd
One word offensive to thy noble ear,
Which might have been omitted, and the tone
Of firm defiance equally preserv'd ;
For that I ask forgiveness.

ABDALLAH.

Less I mark'd
The manner than the matter of thy speech :
If thou dost need forgiveness, freely take it.

KING.

'Twas generously ask'd, and nobly granted :
Such courtesy with valour ever dwells.
Let me too crave for a few words thine ear.
Throughout the trying bus'ness of this day,
Thou art my witness, that my mind upright
Has never been by pow'rful nature bent,
Nor sway'd to favour and opinion form'd,
By long habitual and accustom'd love :
But I with equal hand the balance held
Between thee and my child.

ABDALLAH.

Thou hast indeed.
It is but justice that I should declare it.

KING.

Then to thy candour let me now appeal,
And beg of thee to grant me one request,
Which I do not, but might perhaps, command.

ABDALLAH.

What is it?

KING.

I have search'd my hapless child,
Ev'n to the pith and marrow of her soul,
Have touch'd her to the quick. She never shrinks
Nor wavers in the least. Perhaps, my Lord!
Some fool officious, or some wretch that's worse,
(If there is ought comes between man and wife
That's more pernicious than a meddling fool)
Some false designing friend has wrong'd her fame,
And pour'd his poison in Alonzo's ear.
If thou wilt give some scope to her defence,
And bring the charge from darkness into light,
Then she shall forthwith answer on the spot
Where now she stands before us.

ORMISINDA.

If I fail

To clear my fame ev'n in Abdallah's sight;
If but one dark suspicious speck remains
To make mine honour dim, let me be held

Guilty

Guilty of all. Before-hand I renounce
The right of combat, and submit to die.

ABDALLAH.

Thy wish is fatal, but it shall be granted,
This instant too.

ORMISINDA.

Blessings upon thy head !
Ten thousand blessings ! O ! thou dost not know
How happy thou hast made me. On my breast
A mountain lay : Thy hand has heav'd it off,
And now I breathe again.

ABDALLAH.

Q woman ! woman !
A little way from hence my people wait ;
With them remains a necessary witness.
Thither I go, and quickly will return
To ring thy knell. [Exit Abdallah.]

ORMISINDA.

The knell of all my woes !
My heart knocks at my side, as if 'twould burst
Itself a passage outwards. Yet a while,
Poor suff'ring heart, and thou shalt beat no more.
Shortly for what I am I shall be known,
Then let my doom be squar'd to my desert
Without indulgence.

KING.

I can trust thee, now :
Thine eye secure beams innocence and honour.
Thou art my daughter still.

ALONZO.

ALBERTO.

I fear, O King!

Some practice vile, some infamous imposture,
Supported by false witness. Still I wish
The fair decision of the honest sword.

Enter ABDALLAH in a Spanish Dress as ALONZO.

KING.

God of my soul! What mockery is this?
Unless my eyes deceive me, 'tis Alonzo.

ORMISINDA.

My husband! Ah! *[Runs to embrace him, he
repulses her.]*

ALONZO.

Away, thy husband's shame,
Shame to thy sex, reproach of womankind!

ORMISINDA.

O! shield me, Heav'n! Abdallah was Alonzo.

ALONZO.

To Heav'n appeal not.

ORMISINDA.

I appeal to Heav'n,
Justice on earth will come too late for me.

KING. *[To Alonzo.]*

Hast thou no other witness than thyself?

ALONZO.

I have no other, and none else require.

KING.

Unfeeling man, to trifle with our sorrows,
And like a pageant play a mimic scene :
This is thy hatred of Pelagio's house,
Thy passion to confound a rival race.
Would I were young again !

ALBERTO. [*To Alonzo.*]

Defend thyself.

I can no longer hold me from thy breast.

PELAGIO.

Sound, trumpet, sound ! and Heav'n defend the
right !

ALONZO. [*Drawing his Sword.*]

His blood be on your heads.

[*Ormifinda throws herself between their Swords.*]

ORMISINDA.

Hold ! Strike thro' me !

You know not what you do, unhappy both !
This combat must not, nor it shall not be.
The Sun in Heav'n would backward turn his course,
And shrink from such a spectacle as this,
More horrid than the banquet of Thyestes.
You have no quarrel. I'll remove the cause.
A Roman matron, to redeem her fame,
Before her husband's and her father's eyes
Plung'd in her breast the steel.

[*Stabs herself, and falls.*]

KING.

O ! Desp'rate deed !

What fury urg'd thy hand ?

O R M I S I N D A.

Condemn me not.

There was no other way to save—but that
 Must not as yet be told. My husband! hear
 My dying voice! my latest words believe,
 Whose truth my blood hath seal'd: I'm innocent.
 As I for mercy hope at that tribunal
 Where I shall soon appear, I never wrong'd thee.
 When that is manifest, remember me
 As love like mine deserv'd, and to this youth,
 Who is—

A L O N Z O.

Who is this youth! All-seeing God!
 A secret horror comes upon my soul.
 Who is this youth!

O R M I S I N D A.

He is thy son.

A L O N Z O.

My son!

O R M I S I N D A.

Whom thy forsaken wife in sorrow bore,
 And gave in secret to Costollo's care.

A L B E R T O.

Art thou my mother! Dost thou die for me?

O R M I S I N D A.

I die with pleasure to be just to thee.
 O! if that Power which did inspire my soul
 To rush between your swords, would let me live,
 To

To prove my innocence. Alonzo speak !
Whilst I have breath to answer.

A L O N Z O.

Tho' disarm'd
And soften'd, even if guilty to forgive thee,
Thy solemn call I instantly obey.
That night appointed for our last farewell,
That fatal night for ever curst——thou know'st
What happen'd then.

ORMISINDA.

I know thou didst not come,
Forlorn thou lefted'st me.

A L O N Z O.

Thou wast not forlorn,
In the dark wood with thee there was a youth.

ORMISINDA, (*After a pause.*)

O heaven and earth, a youth ! It was Teresa.

A L O N Z O.

Teresa !

T E R E S A.

Yes, that memorable night,
My brother's sword and helmet plum'd I wore.

A L O N Z O.

Great God ! the snares of hell have caught my soul.

T E R E S A.

The night before, the Princess, as she went,
Was fright'ned in the wood, and I assumed
That warlike form, to seem——

M

ALONZO.

No matter why ?

I saw thee then, and thought thee what thou seemd'st.

KING.

She's innocent ; like gold try'd in the fire,
 Her honour shines : Would I had died for thee !

[To ORMISINDA.]

ORMISINDA.

Why didst thou never till this moment speak ?

[To ALONZO.]

ALONZO.

Because I'm born and destin'd to perdition.
 Had I a voice like Ætna when it roars ;
 For in my breast is pent as hot a fire ;
 I'd speak in flames.

ORMISINDA.

My Lord !

ALONZO.

Do not forgive me.

Do not oppress me with such tender looks :
 I will not be forgiven.

[ORMISINDA raising herself and stretching
 out her arms.]

ORMISINDA.

Come to my arms,

And let me sooth thine anguish. Had I been
 What I to thee appear'd, thy rage was just.
 A Spaniard's temper, and a Prince's pride,

A Lover's

A Lover's passion, and a Husband's honour,
Prompted no less.

A L O N Z O.

Hear, men and angels hear.
Let me fall down and worship.

[Throws himself into her arms,

Oh I loved thee !

I lov'd thee all the while, to madness loved.

O R M I S I N D A.

My husband ! dear as ever to my heart !
In my last moments dear !

A L O N Z O.

My heart is torn.
My head, my brain ! How blest I might have been !
With such a wife, with such a son !

O R M I S I N D A.

To him

Pay all the debt of love thou ow'st to me :
Embrace thy son before mine eyes are clos'd ;
Let me behold him in his father's arms.

A L O N Z O.

Thou brave defender of thy mother's fame !

O R M I S I N D A.

He's gentle too ; his soul dissolves in grief.

A L O N Z O.

My falt'ring tongue dares scarcely call thee son,
Canst thou endure the touch of such a father ?

A L O N Z O.

ALBERTO.

My bursting heart, amidst its grief, is proud
Of such a father. Let me clasp thy knees,
And help to reconcile thee to thyself.

[*They embrace.*]

ORMISINDA.

This pleasing sight subdues the pains of death,
My son!

ALBERTO.

My mother, Oh!

ORMISINDA.

My dearest husband—

A L O N Z O.

What would'st thou say? Alas! thine eye grows dim;
Thy voice begins to fail.

ORMISINDA.

Remember me

When I am dead; remember how I lov'd you.
And thou, Alonzo, live to guard thy son,
To fix the Spanish scepter in——

[*Dies looking at her son.*]

*Alonzo remains silent, with his eyes fixed upon
Ormifinda.*

ALBERTO.

My father!

Under thy gather'd brows I see despair:
Have pity on thy son, who liv'd so long
In total ignorance of what he was:

Who

Who has already seen one parent die,
And for the sad survivor trembles now.
My mother's last request !

A L O N Z O.

I'm mindful of it,
And to her sacred memory will be just.
Hang not on me, my son ! go to the King
And pay thy duty there.

[The King embraces Alberto.]

K I N G.

My child, my all !
I lov'd thee at first sight.

A L O N Z O.

'Tis well ; 'tis well.
The good old King hath still some comfort left.
Now is my time. *[Draws his sword.]*
Oft have I struck with thee,
But never struck a foe with better will
Than now myself. *[Stabs himself and falls.]*

V E L A S C O, C O S T O L L O.

Alas !

(ALBERTO turning.)

A L B E R T O.

'Twas this I fear'd.

A L O N Z O.

There was good cause to fear. I would have liv'd
For thee, if I with honour could have liv'd.

My

A L O N Z O.

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Of such a father. Let me clasp thy knees,
And help to reconcile thee to thyself.

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'Twas this I fear'd.

A L O N Z O.

There was good cause to fear. I would have liv'd
For thee, if I with honour could have liv'd.

My

My son! thy fathers were renown'd in arms;
 The valour of our warlike race is thine:
 But guard against the impulse of their blood.
 Take warning by my fate.

KING.

Thou might'st have liv'd,
 Renown'd Alonzo; even I forgave
 And pitied thee.

A L O N Z O.

I am more just than thou—
 For I did not forgive, nor would I live,
 Upon the alms of other men; their pity—
 Farewel, my son! O! Ormifinda, stay
 'Till I o'ertake thee.

[Dies.]

(*The King to ALBERTO.*)

Dwell not on this sight,
 Prince of Asturia! leave the scene of sorrow,



F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK,

And spoken by Mrs. BARRY.

*THO' lately dead, a Princess, and of Spain,
I am no Ghost, but Flesh and Blood again!
No time to change this Dress, it is expedient,
I pass for British, and your most obedient.*

*How happy, Ladies, for us all—That we,
Born in this Isle, by Magna Charta free,
Are not like Spanish Wives, kept under Lock and Key. }
The Spaniard now, is not like him of Yore,
Who in his whisker'd face, his Titles bore!
Nor Joy, nor Vengeance made him smile or grin,
Fix'd were his features, tho' the Devil within!
He, when once jealous, to wash out the Stain,
Stalk'd home, stabb'd Madam, and stalk'd a out again.
Thanks to the times, this Dagger-drawing passion,
Thro' polish'd Europe, is quite out of Fashion.
Signor Th' Italian, quick of sight and hearing,
Once ever list'ning, and for ever leering,
To Cara Sposa, now politely kind,
He, best of Husbands, is both deaf and blind.
Mynheer the Dutchman, with his sober pace,
Whene'er he finds his Rib has wanted Grace,
He feels no Branches sprouting from his Brain,
But Calculation makes of Loss and Gain;
And when to part with her, occasion's ripe,
Mynheer turns out mine Frow, and smokes his pipe.*

EPILOGUE.

*When a brisk Frenchman's Wife is giv'n to prancing,
 It never spoils his Singing or his Dancing :
 Madame, you false—de tout mon Cœur—Adieu ;
 Begar you Cocu me, I Cocu you.—
 He, toujours gai, dispels each jealous Vapour,
 Takes Snuff, sings Vive l'amour, and cuts a Caper.
 As for John Bull—not he in upper Life,
 But the plain Englishman, who loves his Wife ;
 When honest John, I say, has got his doubts,
 He sullen grows, scratches his head, and pouts.
 What is the Matter with you, Love ? Cries She ;
 Are you not well, my Dearest ? Humph ! Cries He :
 You're such a Brute !—But, Mr. Bull, I've done :
 And if I am a Brute—Who made me one ?
 You know my tenderness—My heart's too full—
 And so's my head—I thank you, Mrs. Bull.
 O you base Man !—Zounds, Madam, there's no bearing,
 She falls a weeping, and he falls a swearing :
 With Tears and Oaths, the Storm domestick ends, }
 The Thunder dies away, the Rain descends,
 She sobs, he melts, and then they kiss and Friends. }
 Whatever ease these modern Modes may bring,
 A little Jealousy is no bad thing :
 To me, who speak from Nature unrefin'd,
 Jealousy is the Bellows of the Mind.
 Touch it but gently, and it warms desir', }
 If handled roughly, you are all on Fire !
 If it stands still, Affection must expire !
 This Truth, no true Philosopher can doubt.
 What'e'r you do—let not the Flame go out.*

